REMARKS/ARGUMENT

This paper is being filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed on November 22, 2006 and the Advisory Action mailed on March 6, 2007. Per the petition and fee submitted herewith, the Applicant extends the response deadline by two months from February 22, 2007 to April 22, 2007. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any further fees which may be due, or credit any overpayment, to deposit account 50-2719. This paper is also being filed in conjunction with a Request for Continued Examination. The Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner for the helpful telephone interview.

Claims 1-21 are pending, and claims 1, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15 and 16 have been amended. New claims 20-22 have been added. Support for the newly added claims is found in the specification at least on page 10, line 15 to page 11, line 15; page 13, lines 21-26; page 16, lines 8-25; page 28, lines 1-6.

Claims 1-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 or 35 U.S.C. §103 over Jones. The Applicant respectfully submits that the rejected claims are neither anticipated by nor obvious over Jones. As noted in the Advisory Action, the Applicant has argued that the recited phenyl-alkane sulfonates are produced using a feed stream in which "lightly branched" hydrocarbons are separated from the other hydrocarbons which may be linear and/or highly branched. However, the Advisory Action states that this feature was not recited in the claims. The Applicant disagrees, and believes that the characterization of hydrocarbons having 2 or 3 primary carbon atoms identifies these compounds as lightly branched. Nevertheless, in order to advance prosecution, the Applicant has amended claims 1, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15 and 16 to include the phrase "lightly branched." Claim 17 recites

a compound made with a feed stream comprising a monomethyl paraffin. The specification at page 16, lines 19-20 identifies monomethyl paraffin as a lightly branched hydrocarbon.

Jones does not disclose a composition made by a process which includes the step of separating lightly branched hydrocarbons from other hydrocarbons in a feed stream. As discussed in more detail below, the Jones composition are produced by a method which straight chain aliphatic hydrocarbon separated from the mixture of hydrocarbon isomers (see Jones column 1, lines 17-21 and column 4, lines 61-68). Withdrawal of the §102 rejection of claims 1-21 over Jones is respectfully requested. New claims 20-23 also recite the "lightly branched" feature, and thus these claims are novel over Jones.

Claims 1-21 are also not rendered obvious by Jones. The Advisory Action states that one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to modify the teachings of Jones to use lightly branched as well as "normal' (i.e., linear) hydrocarbons to produce phenyl alkane sulfonates. This motivation would allegedly be provided by the knowledge that biodegradable phenyl alkane sulfonates could be produced, and that separation of normal paraffins from lightly branched paraffins can be omitted from the Jones process.

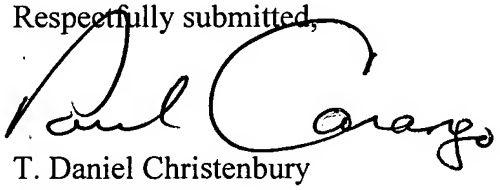
However, Jones emphasizes the importance of this separation step, stating that the alkylating agent source is "all important" in the process of synthesizing the straight chain product (see column 3, lines 50-55) and that

> in order to produce alkylate products containing alkyl groups of maximum linearity and the most advantageous properties insofar as biodegradability is concerned the paraffinic fraction from which the olefin alkylating agent is prepared must be subjected to a suitable separation procedure which isolates the desired normal components from the mixture of paraffinic isomers and analogs.

See Jones column 4, lines 61-68. Moreover, the compositions recited in the rejected claims are not produced from a process which simply omits a step of enriching for "normal" paraffinic isomers. The recited compositions are instead made by a process which deliberately enriches a feed stream for lightly branched paraffinic isomers, which is recited in part a) of claims 1, 16 and 17. The processes which produce the Jones compounds and the compounds of claims 1-21 therefore each contain a specific and deliberate separation step which targets different paraffinic isomers. One of ordinary skill in the art would not, therefore, be motivated to omit the critical step in Jones of enriching for linear paraffins. The Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the §103 rejection of claims 1-21 over Jones. New claims 20-23 also recite a deliberate step of enriching a feed stream for lightly branched paraffinic isomers, and these claims are not rendered obvious by Jones.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that the entire Application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



T. Daniel Christenbury
Reg. No. 31,750
Paul Carango
Reg. No. 42,386
Arthur Gooding
Reg. No. 50,513
Attorneys for Applicant

PC/sh
(215) 656-3320